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WAML meetings have certainly been the source of much learning and networking, but they have also been the source of funny and fun times, and a few dramatic or unique times.

Mary Larsgaard told me that it is the overall congeniality of WAML meetings that she remembered most, but once “Jim O’Donnell put on a helmet with a GPS locator affixed to the top of it, and someone took a photo of him thus crowned.” She also said that “Stan Stevens used to carry around a very small black-cover notebook that he would pull out of a sports-jacket pocket. We kidded him that he was collecting blackmail information for future use! There were some later comments that he was collecting notes for a social history of map librarianship. Now, *that* would be entertaining!”

My first WAML meeting was in the fall of 1989 and was at UC-Irvine. Our field trip was to Catalina. We went to the nature conservatory there, one of the naturalists brought a blind desert fox on the bus, and we were able to hold him. I was very impressed with WAML based on that field trip.

The funniest event that I remember from my twenty-eight years of attending WAML meetings was at the first WAML meeting held in Hawaii. That was in 1992 at BYU-Hawaii, hosted by Riley Moffat. For the field trip we flew to the Big Island to see the volcano Kilauea erupting. We were going to stay at an Army R&R facility in guest cottages four to a cottage. When we got there, there was a women’s craft group



with a token man there, and they were in all the cottages. All that was left was two barracks, so the women stayed in one and the men in the other. Many of the men had flashbacks to their military service. Ron Whistance-Smith snored so loudly the women could hear him through the wall. The barracks had bunks, so people had to practically climb on top of each other to get in the top bunks. Someone's alarm went off on the women's side in the middle of the night. The showers in the barracks were gang showers. It really was quite an experience. We were able to go beyond where the other tourists were allowed to go when we went to see the volcano erupting because we were with a volcanologist. We walked on a black sand beach that was covered by lava shortly after that.

During that same meeting, we left the hotel and got on the bus to go to our next destination. A couple of miles down the road someone asked, "Where's Peter [Stark]?" He wasn't on the bus, so we went back for him. He was in the gift shop buying a birthday present for one of his children. After that, we called someone being left behind "pulling a Peter".

Another memorable field trip was the trip to Mount St. Helens as part of a Seattle meeting. We went to a presentation in the visitors' center, and at the end of it, the curtains opened to give people a view of the mountain, but it was so foggy and rainy we could not see a thing. A volcanologist took us on a hike, and because it was so slippery, people were hanging onto a small tree. The ground was so saturated the tree's roots came out of the ground, and it fell and hit Liz Paulus on the head and Mary Douglass on the arm. Liz was going to follow the bus in her car as she was leaving the tour at some point, but people insisted she get on the bus instead. She and Mary were not seriously injured.

The field trip for the Salt Lake meeting in 2009 was to Promontory Point. That historic site had just opened after being closed for the winter. The staff were preparing to reenact the driving of the golden spike to join the Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads. They did not have enough people to fill all the parts for the rehearsal, so they asked several members of our group to don costumes and take part in the rehearsal. Our members enjoyed doing that.

At the Alaska meeting in 2005, we went on the train from Fairbanks to Denali National Park. We rode on school buses that take campers to different campsites since people are not allowed to drive very far down the road. The bus drivers acted as tour guides and we saw bears and other wildlife. On the train on the way back to Fairbanks, we were able to get a glimpse of Mt. McKinley. It was covered by clouds



the day before.

In the spring of 1992, we met at Cal State-Chico. I had flown from Las Vegas to Reno and got a ride to Chico with Linda Newman. She was not going home directly after the meeting, so I needed to get a ride to the Bay area as I was visiting my brother in Berkeley and then taking the train from Richmond to Reno. Lavonne Jacobson gave me a ride. That was during the Rodney King riots, and there was a curfew for suspicious people, but we did not think two middle-aged lady librarians could be considered suspicious. We got to my brother's neighborhood, and the houses looked run-down, so we got very nervous. We were afraid someone would come outside with a gun. It turned out my brother's house had been renovated on the inside and was quite nice.

In 1994, the fall meeting was in the Grand Tetons at a research center owned by the University of Wyoming. It had been a hunting lodge and had chandeliers made of antlers. It was right on a beautiful lake, and our field trip was to Yellowstone. In 2009, we returned to Wyoming and stayed in Cody. We were able to tour the very interesting Buffalo Bill Historical Center, and our field trip was to Yellowstone again.

In the fall of 2006, Janet Collins and the library staff of Northern Arizona University hosted us. Our field trip was to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon, our pre-meeting trip was a hike in Walnut Canyon, and our post-meeting trip was to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. The catering manager of the university quit just before the meeting, and they didn't hire anyone else right away. We were staying in the motel on campus that was part of the hotel school, and the hotel school stepped in and catered the breaks for us.

Vlad Shkurkin sponsored a professor from Moscow State University, Dr. Vladimir Svyatoslavovich Kusov, to give a presentation titled "Count Nikolai Rumiantsev and Russian Exploration of Alaska and North America" at the Bellingham, Washington, meeting in 1991. The professor did not speak English, so Vlad translated his presentation phonetically so the professor could give it in English. Vlad wanted the professor to experience American culture, so when we all went out to eat, he ordered a cheeseburger and a pineapple milkshake for the professor. That is probably the only time we had a speaker from a country outside North America.

I hosted the first WAML meeting held in Las Vegas. I held it at the Desert Research Institute next door to the campus where I work. The person who was the librarian there, Eva Stowers, had worked in my library. We did not have to pay anything to



use the conference room there and we were able to bring in our own food for breaks as opposed to using expensive campus catering. The catch was if someone at that institution wanted to use the conference room, they had precedent. They did decide to hold a meeting in the conference room, so we had a day of presentations, a day of a field trip to Lake Mead and Hoover Dam, then another day of presentations and the business meeting. We put all the map exchange boxes and the boxes of the vendors' material in the library there the afternoon before the field trip. I think that is the only time we had a divided meeting schedule.

My library did not allow me to hold my second meeting in the library, and the student union conference rooms were too expensive, so I held it in a building that belonged to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas hotel school. The hotel school catered the breaks, and the students were very helpful. Some WAML attendees went as a group to see the Cirque du Soleil show "O" at the Bellagio Casino. I think seeing a show as a group was also a WAML first. My field trip for that meeting was to Death Valley and was arranged through Educational Outreach on my campus. They forgot to get a permit from the national park people for the bus, so at one point armed park rangers surrounded the empty bus.

I have learned a lot through the presentations at WAML meetings both about mapping and about the areas where we met, and I have really enjoyed seeing different areas of the West through the field trips. I have also enjoyed getting to know map librarians and have really had a good time at the meetings and field trips. I wish WAML fifty more years of camaraderie, presentations, workshops, and field trips.

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